

# NEW DIRECTIONS

*It is common sense to take a method and try it.  
If it fails, admit it frankly and try another.  
But above all, try something.*

—Franklin Delano Roosevelt



Pat Hamlin

*Over the past three decades*, New England has witnessed tremendous progress in the protection, preservation, and restoration of our environment. This progress has generated substantial benefits – fresher air to breathe, cleaner water to drink, and safer places to live, work, and play – for us, the inhabitants of this region, and for our children. Much of this credit goes to EPA's partners, those New England citizens, businesses, and government organizations that recognize the critical importance of a healthy environment, without whose help EPA would not have been able to protect the environment as effectively as we do now.

Our work is not yet done, however. We still need to tackle the remaining sources of pollution in New England that are difficult to measure and track – atmospheric deposition, for example – and those which are persistent or difficult to treat – such as heavy metals or nutrients. We should still work to forge new partnerships with industries and develop new strategies for meeting – and exceeding – environmental goals. We must continue to change our organization into one more responsive to and reflective of the environment we protect. As we progress on these fronts, we will focus on measuring and tracking the effects of these actions on the environment, and will communicate these results to you clearly and succinctly.

## PROGRESS, NOT PROCESS

In continuing with the cultural and organizational change that is taking place in our New England Office, EPA is working to become a truly performance-based organization, concentrating less on process-oriented activities and more on specific goals – measuring our success based on the achievement of these goals. One tool that will allow us to do this is the newly implemented RESULTS, a comprehensive system utilized for planning and tracking regional goals and accomplishments. Another part of this effort is to introduce a major training program for our employees to teach them new skills – how to build partnerships, work with communities, and provide pollution prevention assistance.

## NEW APPROACHES: BUILDING ON A FOUNDATION

Over the past three years, EPA's New England Office has introduced a number of new initiatives intended to change the face of environmental protection. Our overall challenge now is to build on and broaden these successful innovations and turn small, promising initiatives into large, ongoing activities that will be more fully integrated into our work.

The CLEAN program is designed to help small businesses – primarily metal finishers in Maine and New Hampshire – employ responsible environmental practices. In the next year, we will be expanding this program to three additional small business sectors – printers, wood product companies, and auto body shops – in all of the New England states.

Our NEEATeam has been assembled to complement EPA's traditional command-and-control role with a more accessible, flexible assistance presence, and to listen to and address the regulated community's questions and concerns. We will continue to expand the NEEATeam's activities beyond its current focus of four sectors – printing, metal finishing, electronics, and municipalities – into new areas, including auto repair, wood coaters, and vocational/technical schools.



EPA's Center for Environmental Industry and Technology (CEIT) is designed to promote the New England environmental technology industry – a sector that contributes \$10 billion a year and 150,000 jobs to New England's economy. The upcoming year will see an expansion of CEIT's role into activities involving verification of innovative environmental technology, streamlining of technology permitting processes, and involvement of innovative technology in Supplemental Environmental Projects.

EPA's New England Office will also continue to emphasize that pollution prevention is good for the environment, as well as good for the economy, and will develop the environmental and economic indicators to prove it. One example of this effort, EPA's regional "Getting the GreenBack" campaign, brings together New England assistance and recognition programs, along with success stories about companies that have implemented these programs, to help show businesses that pollution prevention is the best way to achieve environmental compliance.



## BECOMING PARTNERS IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Our office's recent reorganization enables us to become a truly performance-based organization, concentrating on specific goals and forming new partnerships with states, tribes, businesses, and individual citizens. An excellent example of this partnering can be found in the recently formed Performance Partnership Agreements between EPA's New England Office and all of the New England states. This new approach streamlines numerous grant programs into one agreement that allows states flexibility to address their most serious environmental problems through mechanisms best suited to the tasks. From now on, EPA and the

states will have integrated work plans that jointly define environmental goals and measurable indicators of success.

A major tool in the successful implementation of Performance Partnership Agreements is the New England Goals and Indicators Project, a collaboration between EPA, the New England states, and other partners to develop a consistent set of environmental goals and indicators. Thanks to the efforts of this project, we will be able to gauge our progress in meeting public health and environmental goals through a series of mutually agreed-upon measures. The first of these indicators – included in this report – provide a solid foundation upon which to build.

A primary focus of future EPA partnering efforts is a continuing commitment to community-based environmental protection. In finalizing comprehensive conservation and management plans for the Lake Champlain, Massachusetts Bay, and Casco Bay watersheds, we recognized that the success of these plans will depend on a combination of local, state, and federal efforts. We will continue to assist communities in developing groundwater and watershed protection programs that reflect local conditions, and in addition, will expand our Urban Environmental Initiatives program to help inner-city communities protect the environment while promoting economic development.

A significant portion of the Urban Environmental Initiative effort is the Brownfields Initiative, designed to remove the regulatory barriers that impede the economic redevelopment of contaminated property, facilitate the cleanup of such property, and return the property to productive use. Fourteen New England communities now have Brownfields Pilot Projects underway, with more expected to begin within the next year. We also plan to quantify the economic advantages of EPA's Brownfields activities in New England and will measure how key economic indicators (such as creation of jobs and state/local tax revenues) are affected by these activities.

## BETTER TARGETING OUR RESOURCES

As part of our Strong Targeted Enforcement Program (STEP-UP), we are now targeting our enforcement resources toward areas with the highest environmental and human health risk, or where there is the greatest likelihood of significant violations – areas such as urban and sensitive ecosystems, public agencies, and specific industrial sectors – to achieve the greatest compliance levels. We anticipate greater integration and alignment of functions within our office to make these programs even more effective. In the future, we will be significantly increasing our presence in the regulated community and initiating more enforcement actions where most needed.

## CONCLUSION

The most valuable resources in New England are the people in local communities, businesses, schools, and other organizations who see an environmental problem, devote time and energy to solving it, and in the process, discover creative approaches to environmental protection. The hard work of some of these individuals has been highlighted throughout this report, but it is important to remember that there are many, many more people out there who quietly strive to restore and improve the environment with little fanfare or recognition. To those individuals, we at EPA's New England Office sincerely thank you for your effort.

Successful environmental protection requires the cooperation of people across society – citizens, businesses, academics – all joining hands with public officials to make government work. As we work together, may our labor chart a healthy and sustainable future, not only for our generation, but for those to follow.

